

CHINA

# Carrier tour captivates Hong Kong

Residents warmly praise PLA sailors, call visit an eye-opening experience

By LI LEI in Hong Kong  
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Hong Kong residents on Saturday praised the first domestically built aircraft carrier, the CNS *Shandong*, referring to their tour aboard the warship as an eye-opening experience that lifted their sense of national pride.

They were among 2,000 visitors who secured tickets for a rare public tour of the 300-meter-long carrier and its escort fleet.

The fleet, which includes the CNS *Yan'an*, a Type 055 destroyer; the CNS *Zhanjiang*, a Type 052D destroyer; and the CNS *Yuncheng*, a Type 054A frigate, arrived in Hong Kong on Thursday for a five-day visit.

The vessels opened for public tours over the weekend, making Hong Kong the first city in the country to welcome two national aircraft carriers since the CNS *Liaoning* visited in 2017.

At about 9 am, the first group of visitors, many aboard a ferry, pulled out their cellphones to capture images of the *Shandong* as it loomed against the backdrop of Victoria Harbour.

"This is truly remarkable," said Kong Kin-chung, a 70-year-old retired Hong Kong police officer, his voice trembling after seeing the carrier and its arsenal. He described the *Shandong* as a "powerful symbol" of China's growing strength.

Kong said he was impressed by the kindness of the People's Liberation Army sailors on board, which he said contrasted with the behavior of British soldiers during the colonial period.

"The PLA personnel are courteous and welcoming," he said. "This is quite different from the bullying behavior of British soldiers."

He voiced support for Hong Kong's National Security Law, now in its fifth year, crediting it for restoring stability to the city after the 2019 protests, which he blamed on "educational shortcomings".

"It pained me seeing young people destroying their own city. The law will help reform our education system and strengthen national identity among youth," he said.

The sailors' hospitality also impressed Yam Wang-tik, a sixth-grade student who toured the *Shandong* with his grandfather. Expecting strict formality, he found the sailors "hospitable" and the aircraft on display "majestic".

"The carrier and its warplanes, especially the J-15 fighter jets, are far bigger than what I've seen on TV," Yam said, adding that he planned on researching more about the weapons he saw during his visit.

A total of 10,000 free tickets were distributed for public tours over the weekend, with 2,000 visitors allowed aboard the *Shandong* and 8,000 visiting the *Zhanjiang* and *Yuncheng* at the PLA Hong Kong

Garrison's Ngong Shuen Chau naval base on Stonecutters Island.

On board the *Shandong*, visitors explored interactive areas where PLA navy personnel gave demonstrations on weapons and navigational equipment. They were then guided to an elevator leading to the sprawling flight deck, roughly the size of two soccer fields, where 14 carrier-based aircraft were displayed.

The lineup included J-15 fighter jets, carrier-based helicopters and anti-submarine warfare aircraft.

Among the visitors was Tom Pang Lok-sang, a music teacher from Macao, who boarded the ships with his family.

"The transition was so smooth. One moment we're swaying on the ferry, the next we're on what feels like solid ground," he said. "That's when I truly grasped the carrier's enormous size."

Pang said the visit demonstrated "our nation's growing confidence", adding that seeing the advanced capabilities firsthand reassured residents that China can defend itself and maintain peace.

Lam Tse-shong, a Hong Kong entrepreneur with business ties to the mainland, called the visit an "eye-opening experience".

"I'm truly impressed by our nation's military advancements," Lam said. He added that interactions with PLA personnel changed his perceptions. "On television, they appear so solemn, but in reality, they've shown us nothing but kindness."

Reflecting on the theme for the *Shandong's* visit, "Secure Country, Sweet Home", Lam said Hong Kong can always rely on the mainland.

PLA officer Zhou Miaoying said she was delighted to interact with young visitors during the tours.

"In my regular duties, I rarely get to engage with children," she said, smiling as she recalled how visitors frequently asked to take photos with her. "They kept praising how nice my uniform looks, and I absolutely adore hearing their Cantonese accent."

Zhou said she planned to explore Hong Kong during shore leave, including trying local cuisine in Mong Kok and viewing the city's skyline from Victoria Peak.

The public tours were the centerpiece of the *Shandong's* five-day visit, fostering exchanges between naval personnel and Hong Kong residents.

The navy crew will also participate in soccer matches, tug-of-war competitions and cultural exchanges with the PLA Hong Kong Garrison and Hong Kong disciplinary forces, including police and fire services.

The visit concludes on Monday with a farewell ceremony at the Ngong Shuen Chau barracks, where Chief Secretary for Administration Eric Chan Kwok-ki will speak.



Tourists experience the Big LEGO Coaster at Legoland Shanghai Resort, which officially opened to the public on Saturday. It is China's first and the world's largest Legoland at launch. WANG XIANG / XINHUA

## China's first Legoland resort opens

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The Legoland Shanghai Resort opened its doors on Saturday and became China's first and the world's largest Legoland at launch, underscoring the brand's confidence in the Chinese market according to a senior executive with Merlin Entertainments.

The 318,000-square-meter resort in Shanghai's Jinshan district boasts eight themed lands with more than 75 interactive rides, shows and attractions, as well as thousands of models built using over 85 million Lego bricks.

"We have huge confidence in the Chinese market and its strengths, with 55 million people living within a two-hour drive of the resort," said John Jakobsen, chief strategic portfolio development officer of Merlin Entertainments, which operates the resort. He noted China's position as the world's second-largest theme park market and Chinese consumers' growing appreciation for Lego's educational and creative values.

The resort integrates distinctive Chinese elements throughout. Signature attractions include the world's first Lego Monkie Kid live show, inspired by the Chinese classic novel Journey to the West, and a boat tour featuring miniature versions of Chinese water towns and modern Shanghai cityscapes built from Lego bricks at 25 times magnification. At the center of the park, Legoland Creative World features the largest-ever Lego minifigure, Dada, standing 26 meters tall and weighing 136 metric tons.

"We have unique features in Miniland that showcase the high-lights of China replicated in Lego bricks. We have found fantastic Chinese IPs like Monkie Kid, and we have the boat tour ride inspired by the water towns in this region," Jakobsen said.

Fiona Eastwood, CEO of Merlin Entertainments, said the company's understanding of Chinese



Legoland Shanghai Resort opened its doors to the public on Saturday and features 75 interactive rides, shows and attractions. GAO ERQIANG / CHINA DAILY

consumers and its experience operating in China for more than a decade enabled it to create Legoland Shanghai as "the ultimate theme park and hotel destination."

Niels B. Christiansen, president and CEO of the Lego Group, expressed optimism on the resort's role in enhancing the company's presence in China, complementing its retail network and brand events.

"I look forward to Legoland Shanghai becoming a new cultural landmark for family interaction and bringing unique joy to all Lego fans in China and beyond," Christiansen said.

A mother who traveled from Shandong province with her 8-year-old daughter shared their excitement about visiting on opening day.

"My daughter loves Lego, and we particularly wanted to experience the opening day activities," she said. "The indoor attractions, especially Miniland, are very appealing."

To mark the launch, the resort is hosting a "Grand Opening Week" through July 13, featuring themed decorations, immersive experiences and exclusive offers. Daily welcome shows are being held at Lego Plaza, giving visitors

opportunities to interact with Legoland characters.

The resort also includes 10 retail outlets, six themed restaurants and a Legoland Hotel offering character meet-and-greets and nightly activities.

Construction of the resort began in November 2021, with more than 10,000 workers from 300 teams across 15 countries involved in the project.

Zhuang Jian, chairman of the Shanghai New Jinshan Investment Holding Group Co, said the resort has brought advanced international theme park management concepts and cultural connotations, injecting new vitality into the tourism market in Jinshan and Shanghai.

Following Shanghai Disneyland, Legoland is the city's second world-class entertainment theme park. US entertainment company Warner Bros is also set to launch a Making of Harry Potter studio tour at Shanghai's Jinjiang Action Park in 2027, the first of its kind in China and the third globally.



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## Scientists aid WHO loneliness response

By YAN DONGJIE in Tianjin  
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Research conducted by Chinese scientists on mobile phone usage among university students contributed to a World Health Organization report released recently, which identified loneliness as a pressing global health threat.

Yu Bin, an associate professor at Tianjin University's Institute of Applied Psychology, was one of 20 international experts selected for the WHO's Technical Advisory Group on Social Connection last year.

During a discussion at the WHO headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland last October, Yu advocated for the inclusion of the "impact of digital technology on social interaction" in the WHO's Commission on Social Connection report.

He noted initial disagreement among experts on the topic, citing a lack of definitive scientific evidence on whether digital technology's effects are positive or negative. His argument drew on research he and his team conducted on mobile phone usage at universities, which revealed an average daily usage of 7.5 hours.

"My point is, regardless, digital technology profoundly impacts people's physical and mental health as well as social connections in the digital age," Yu said.

His proposal gained support, leading to the addition of three dedicated pages in the final report analyzing the potential impact of digital technology on social connection.

Yu also helped proofread the Chinese summary of the WHO report to raise awareness among government bodies and academia and attract more scholars to the field.

"This participation signifies international recognition of my research and offers a platform to share China's insights within global health governance," Yu said.

The report marks a milestone in global public health awareness and fosters cross-border collaboration. Yu's pivotal role underscores Tianjin University's research strength in this vital field and China's proactive commitment to addressing global health challenges, the university said.

Yu's contribution led to a further invitation in 2025 to join the WHO's new guideline development group on social isolation and loneliness. This new group is tasked with developing evidence-based intervention guidelines covering all age groups.

Yu emphasized the need for context-specific guidelines: "The causes of social isolation and loneliness vary due to differences in social systems and historical and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, intervention guidelines need to be tailored, considering national contexts, gender, age, and other factors."

He highlighted effective interventions already existing in China, such as self-organized square dancing and traditional games like mahjong among the elderly, which positively alleviate social isolation and loneliness. "I hope our research can provide a reference and inspiration for intervention efforts in other countries," Yu added.

Lu Ruotong contributed to this story.

## Professional nurses deliver home care via digital platforms

At the home of 75-year-old Wu Ling in the city of Baiyin, Northwest China's Gansu province, Zhao Yanyan gently and professionally changed the urinary catheter of the elderly woman's bedridden husband.

Deeply grateful, Wu poured Zhao, a licensed nurse, a cup of tea and clasped her hands in gratitude.

"After my child taught me how to use my phone to book a nurse online, Zhao has been coming regularly to care for my husband since April 2023," Wu said. Her spouse has been confined to a bed since 2019, making daily care a challenge.

"With this 'internet plus nursing' service, he gets the same attentive care at home as in the hospital," she added.

For many senior Chinese citizens

like Wu, navigating hospital visits can be a complex ordeal.

Services ordering nurses online or via phone are bringing professional care directly to homes across China, offering warm, high-quality care with unprecedented convenience for the nation's growing "silver-haired" generation.

Zhao, a 37-year-old chief nurse in the neurology department at the First People's Hospital of Baiyin, exemplified this shift. Since her hospital launched the service in 2023, she has conducted over 130 home care visits annually.

"As medical workers, we strive to serve every patient well," Zhao said.

Zhao's hospital undertook rigorous preparations before offering the service. "We conducted comprehensive training and assessment

for all nurses, covering laws, ethics, service standards, technical procedures, and emergency response," said Li Fangli, head of the hospital's nursing department. "Only those who passed the assessment can register on the platform and provide home services," Li added.

The results are impressive — the hospital has fulfilled over 700 orders so far. Patients simply submit requests via the hospital's official platform, which then matches them with specialized nurses boasting at least five years of clinical experience.

"Currently, 157 nurses are registered on our platform," said hospital president Gao Zhenhua. "This program solves key problems for elderly patients, those with chronic diseases, people with limited

mobility, and offers extended care after discharge, greatly reducing the burden of hospital travel."

Since 2019, the National Health Commission has designated pilot provincial region and released guiding frameworks. In Shanghai, for example, all community health centers offer "doorstep nursing", with 11 categories covering 42 services now covered by basic medical insurance.

China's official data indicated that by late 2024, over 310 million people aged 60 and above, accounting for 22 percent of the national population. As the demographic shift deepens, "internet plus nursing" is emerging as a vital tool to address the challenges of elderly care.

XINHUA

## Robotic revelry



Children interact with soccer robots at an AI robot exhibition in Jinhua, Zhejiang province on Sunday. The event offers an immersive experience of AI technology during the summer vacation as parents and kids engage with a variety of robots, SHI KUANGBING / XINHUA